



RFSI

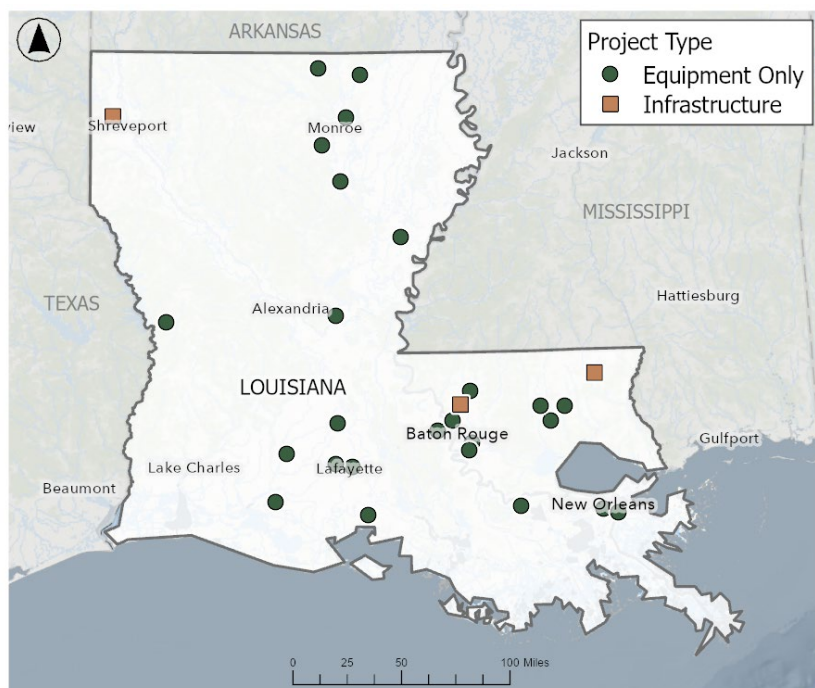
Resilient Food Systems
Infrastructure Program

Louisiana



State Overview

USDA awarded the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry **\$6.2 million** through the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) Program. The objective of RFSI is to expand capacity for aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced agricultural food products. These federal funds will support 29 Louisiana infrastructure and equipment projects increasing access to new market opportunities, benefiting local and regional producers and processors.



Project Highlights

- **Expand mayhaw berry processing** to produce jams, salad dressings, sauces, syrups, and other value-added products so this cranberry-like berry, native to the Southern U.S. region, can be made available year-round—benefiting at least 50 berry producers.
- **Grow capacity for farm-raised catfish production** through the acquisition of cold storage and processing equipment, enabling market access to farmers markets, retail stores, and restaurants across Southwest Louisiana.
- **Acquire specialized equipment for pecan pralines** to increase retail and online market opportunities for at least 12 nut growers through the value-added production of this popular confection.

Anticipated Outcomes*

462

Local/Regional
Producers Benefited

309

New Market Outlets
Established

134

New Value-Added
Products Developed

3

New
Facilities
Constructed

56

Storage/Aggregation
Units Purchased

13

Distribution
Vehicles Purchased

169

Processing Equipment
Purchased

17

Jobs Created

**These numbers are reported by states and subawardees.*

RFSI was awarded to the 56 States and Territories in May 2023. Each state conducted a competitive grant review and selection process. States identified their funding priorities through extensive outreach with key industry stakeholders, which guided their selection process to ensure a robust state and local food system representation. Selected projects fund locally and regionally produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, excluding meat and poultry.

Infrastructure Projects: Snapshot

Infrastructure Grant projects can involve facility and equipment expansion and upgrades, new construction, and modernized information technology systems.

Louisiana invested more than **\$1.95 million** across 3 Infrastructure projects, benefiting 12 local and regional producers. These projects include:

- Building an on-farm goat dairy processing facility for specialty value-added goat milk, cheeses, yogurts, and desserts;
- Constructing a new distribution warehouse facility for fresh produce, dairy, eggs, and honey in Northwest Louisiana; and
- Developing a shared honey processing facility so beekeepers in Southeast Louisiana can process, store, and bottle honey products.

Equipment Only Projects: Snapshot

Equipment Only projects are intended to purchase special purpose equipment such as cold/dry storage, distribution vehicles, and processing and packaging equipment.

Louisiana invested more than **\$2 million** across 26 Equipment Only projects, purchasing more than 219 pieces of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution equipment—including walk-in cold storage, freeze dryers, cheese vats, and honey bottling machines. The state expects 450 local and regional producers will benefit from reduced harvest loss, improved product quality and shelf life, and access to an estimated 259 new markets.

Statewide Standouts



More than 75 percent of Louisiana's RFSI funding supports supply chain improvements for handling fruits and vegetables such as leafy greens, sweet potatoes, peppers, and strawberries.



Louisiana invested over \$890,000 in three projects focused on supporting the state's beekeepers with expanded honey processing and distribution capacity.



Four Louisiana projects strengthen the state's dairy industry with funding to support facilities and equipment for milk processing and transport.



More than 55 percent of Louisiana projects support a wide variety of value-added production, including pecan pralines, stir-fry vegetable packs, pickles, and "zoodles"—zucchini noodles!